

FORUM

IN MEMORIAM

Edmond Bloch
(22/11/1923 - 04/09/2011)

Edmond Bloch has passed away in Durham, North Carolina, where he had held professorships at Duke University in Anesthesiology and in Pediatrics.

Born in Koffiefontein, he graduated from UCT in 1946, entering general practice in Port Elizabeth in 1948. An interest in anaesthesia took him in 1962, with his family, to the UK, where he trained in Liverpool at Sefton General Hospital and at Alder Hey Children's Hospital.

He obtained Fellowships of the

Faculties of Anaesthetists of the Royal Colleges of Surgeons in England, and in Dublin, both in 1964.

Returning to Port Elizabeth (where his brother Basil was a gynaecologist and obstetrician) he practised as a consultant anaesthetist, later in partnership with John Coxon. In 1965 he established there the Respiratory and Neonatal Intensive Care Unit which he directed until 1977. In 1967 he received the Meritorious Service Award of the Medical Association of South Africa.

He was appointed in 1977 to the Department of Anesthesiology at Duke University, where he held professorships in Anesthesiology (1978) and also in Pediatrics (1985). At Duke, he established a renowned paediatric anaesthesiology unit and practised, researched and taught there until clinical retirement in 1993, but continued for some years as a popular mentor, publishing papers, articles and books. Highly regarded as a meticulous and innovative clinician, he was always highly valued by his students, now practising throughout the world. In 1976 he was awarded the Merel Harmel Teaching Award.

In 1950 he had married Eda Frankel, who had also graduated MB ChB from UCT. He is survived by her and by their children Myrna (in Winston Salem, USA), and Colin, an architect and town planner in Bristol, England, and by their five grandchildren.

Edmond Bloch's many research interests included the pioneering of parental presence during the induction of anaesthesia. He is remembered by colleagues, friends and family as a kind and gentle man.

Colin Bloch

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Haroon Moosa Ameen (1936 - 2011)

Newcastle surgeon, Haroon Ameen, passed away on 17 September 2011 at the age of 75. He was a victim of gastric cancer with which he had battled for almost a year, following radical gastric surgery. As his condition progressed he accepted the inevitable, and towards the end

decided against any further aggressive treatment, having made peace with himself and with his Maker.

Haroon was a true product of northern Natal, born in Wasbank in 1936 and schooled in Dundee where he matriculated in 1954. With the offer of a bursary he studied medicine at the Nelson R Mandela School of Medicine and qualified MB ChB in 1961. He entered general practice in Newcastle for a few years before specialising in surgery at King Edward VIII Hospital in Durban and later obtaining his Edinburgh surgical fellowship. (He also worked in Edinburgh for a year.)

On his return, he was appointed senior consultant in surgery at King Edward VIII Hospital, a position he held until 1970, when, with his wife Julie, he relocated to Newcastle to start a specialist surgical practice. With maximal sessional appointments at both the Madadeni and Newcastle provincial hospitals, he began a career which was to extend for the next 40 years. Having worked with him for the best part of those 40 years as his anaesthesiologist, I can safely say that he was in his true element from the day he started work in Newcastle. This enthusiasm, energy and love for his work never diminished until the very end.

His selfless lifelong dedication, benefiting in particular the indigent and disadvantaged, extended through the entire northern Natal community. Every patient was special, and it made not an ounce of difference whether they were poor or rich, or black or white – he was dedicated and gave his best to each one of them.

Another of his passions was teaching, which he would do at every opportunity, whether to nurses, students or doctors. He invariably succeeded in getting them interested in surgery – testimony to this is the number of doctors who went on to eventually become surgeons. He was also an external examiner for many years at his alma mater, the Nelson Mandela School of Medicine, for both under- and postgraduate students.

Although he had little time for politics, when it came to the crunch he showed his mettle. An example of this was during an ANC-organised mass defiance march through the streets of Newcastle in the early 1990s, protesting against the brutality of apartheid, when he and his wife were in the forefront of the march to present a memorandum to the police commissioner.

Mr Ameen was also one of the founder members of the then MASA branch in Northern KwaZulu-Natal. After transformation this became the Northern KZN branch of SAMA. He served a stint as its president, illustrating the high regard in which he was held by all his colleagues. It was extremely gratifying when, a few years ago, Haroon was awarded the Distinguished Service Medal by the Association of Surgeons of South Africa in recognition of his exceptional service to medicine.

Whenever possible, he enjoyed his hobbies of golf and a few rare fishing excursions, the latter crowned with the hauling in of a shark on the Namibian coast some years ago. He is survived by his wife Julie, two children and six grandchildren.

We mourn the passing of a truly good man, and salute the immensity of his contribution to medicine.

I M Seedat

B R S Wilson